

June 16th, 2024
“The Lord’s Prayer - Our Needs”
Luke 11: 2-4

Monday: “Forgive Us” - Luke 11:4

We can probably all think of someone who has hurt us. Someone who has wronged us. Someone who owes us something - maybe a thank you or an apology. Maybe something much more. Some of us are carrying around the weight of wounds from several years ago. The wounds of debts that we feel that someone owes us. Maybe you even have a list of “should haves”. People that should have treated you differently. But have you ever stopped to consider the times that you have been on someone else’s debt list? Times that you have hurt someone else?

Far too many of us go through life without realizing the grace of God. We may understand in our minds that Christ died for our sins, but that truth hasn’t sunk into our hearts and changed us. Grace isn’t something we can ever earn or have taken away. God’s paid for our debts, yet somewhere along the line we got it into our heads that if we sin enough times then we lose God’s grace. That is like saying that Christ’s death was not enough to cover the weight of our sins. It’s simply not true. But in a world that expects everything to turn out balanced in the end, grace just doesn’t make sense.

How do you claim God’s grace in your daily life?

Prayer: God, we confess that sometimes we are quick to hold the sins of others against them without taking time to consider, Precious Lord, how we have sinned against you. Forgive us, we pray. Amen.

Tuesday: “Our Sins” - Luke 11:4

Because of the Fall, we hurt each other. We may not mean to. We may try our very best, but angry words still slip out. Intentions are misunderstood. And other times we intentionally hurt each other. We live in a broken world as broken people. It is easy to see how we accumulate sin against each other. Hold grudges. But we owed another type of debt as well. A debt to God. For all of us have sinned against God and fallen short of the glory that was prepared for us. When we don’t follow God’s leading. When we purposely do something we know we shouldn’t. This is sin. This is a debt against God. Its the debt that a simple apology and future good intentions couldn’t erase. A spiritual debt the wage of which was death.

And yet, Christ paid our debt for our sin for us. A debt that he did not owe. He paid our debt out of loving kindness. Because of the cross and resurrection our debt is covered by the grace of God.

What are some ways that you have hurt other people? How have you experienced forgiveness?

Prayer: Lord, we confess that because we are human we hurt other people. Even when we try not to, it still seems like we slip into sin and cause each other pain. Forgive us, we pray. Amen.

Wednesday: “As We” - Luke 11:4

Pastor Adam Hamilton told the story of a Christmas gift that got misplaced one year. It wasn’t until he and his family were taking down the tree in January that they found the gift. They

could have chosen to throw the gift away along with the stumble of the old tree. But that wouldn't make it any less of a gift. The intention of the giver was for it to be a gift, but they had to unwrap it in order to put it to use. Friends, we need to unwrap the gift of grace. Choosing to accept God's gift in our life. Not fearing that we are going to lose it or that it is going to become any less powerful or meaningful of a gift as time goes on.

But if we don't need to give grace in order to earn grace, since it is a gift, why would we need to forgive others their debts? We know that God has forgiven our debts, isn't that enough? Because God knows the pain that can come when we try to get even. Forgiving sins, doesn't mean forgetting them. Christ knows the hurts and pains that we all carry. Times when others have wounded us with their words, actions, and inactions. In fact he deeply feels those pains, since they were some of the sins he went to the cross to overcome. But that doesn't mean that we are excused from answering the question, "what are you going to do with those who have sinned against you?"

Are you going to hang on to those pains? Are you going to try to make others earn their way back into your good graces? Are you going to try to get even? Will any of those things bring you true peace and joy?

What is the difference between forgiving and forgetting?

Prayer: Almighty God, we confess that we are slow to forgive because we are afraid that it is letting people off the hook. Teach us, O Lord, that forgiveness is not about condoning, but instead is a gift of freedom for ourselves. Forgive us, we pray. Amen.

Thursday: "Forgive Others" - Luke 11:4

When we pray "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us" we remember the powerful truth of the cross. We remember the undeserved and unearned grace that we received through Jesus Christ and we desire to show others that grace, letting it shine through our lives. Who knows how people's lives will be transformed because of the forgiveness we offer. Maybe people will come to know Jesus Christ because of the gift we offer. Or maybe people will ignore the gift that is given, choosing to disregard its power and meaning. We cannot control what others do with the forgiveness we offer them, we are simply admonished to forgive. To not let things eat us up or define us, for in the end that will harm us even more.

When we pray this prayer, we remember the people that we have hurt in our lives. We seek reconciliation. But even if they do not forgive us we know we are forgiven by God.

Why do we offer forgiveness?

Prayer: God of Grace, thank you for offering us the gift of forgiveness. As we forgive others, may it share that gift with them, we pray. Amen.

Friday: "Prayer" - Luke 11: 2-4

When we pray this prayer, we essentially say "Treat me as I treat my neighbor". Think back to the parable Jesus told about a man who could not pay his debt to the King. The King graciously repaid his enormous debt and did not throw the man into prison. But then the same man, the forgiven man, came across someone who owed him so little and he threw him in jail. All too often we forget how much we have been forgiven. We fail to unwrap the gift of grace, so we don't act as forgiven people, forgiving others. But we are called to seek to forgive others because we have been forgiven. Who do you need to forgive this day? What debts do you need to let go of? Let us grab firmly hold of the grace, the forgiveness of God, remembering our debts have been forgiven, and finding the strength to forgive the debts of others.

What makes forgiveness easy or hard for you?

Prayer: God, give us hearts of forgiveness and minds that are focused on you, we pray, in your name. Amen.